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A Paſtoral Letter,

TO

Families Viſited with Sickneſs.

Thomas
Wheeler
Acad
1771

A Pastoral Letter,

TO

Families Visited with

Sickness.

BRITISH MUSEUM

A Paſtoral Letter,

TO

Families Viſited with Sickneſs.

From ſeveral MINISTERS of BOSTON,

At a time of *Epidemical Sickneſs* Diſtreſſing of the Town.

The Third Impreſſion.

YOU are ſo well Inſtructed, *O our Afflicted Neighbours*, that you cannot be ignorant of this Truth; *Sickneſs & Weakneſs carry's in it, very ſtrong Obligations to Duty*: And *Sickneſs* in a *Family* beſpeaks *Duty* from no leſs than all the *Family*. When *Sickneſs* comes into any *Family*, tho' but *One Perſon* ſhould be Viſited, it adminiſters a *Manifold Occaſion* for *Serious Religion* to be Exerciſed by the whole *Family*, even by *every Perſon* belonging unto it. We have tho't it therefore a part of our *Paſtoral Watchfulneſs* over you our Dear Flock, to put into your Hands, (for, alas, how many do *Forget the Exhortations* delivered by us, when we manage the Publick *Exhortations*!) a Brief, a Plain,

a Faithful *Monitor* of the *Duty*, whereto the Voice of God by *Sickness* among us, is a loud calling of us. These are the **Admonitions**, whereto your Attention is now demanded in the Name & Fear of God.

I. There is a *Duty* incumbent upon the whole *Family*, even upon *every Person* that can understand their *Duty*, when *Sickness* comes upon any Person in the Family. If any *One Person* in a Family be under any *Sickness*, there is an Holy Improvement of it, and an Improvement in Holiness on it, whereof *every Soul* in the Family should be studious.

Particularly,

First, Let the *whole Family* acknowlege, that the *Sickness* of any one in the Family, is by the *Providence* of the Great GOD bro't upon them. When there was only a *Child* sick in a Family, it was said, 2 Sam. XII. 15. *The Lord strook the Child, and it was very sick.* 'Tis *Atheism* in us if we do not own, that a *Sparrow* falls not unto the Ground, without the *Providence* of God; and we are Blinder than the *Owl*, if we see not the *Providence* of God in it, when *Sickness* threatens to lay any of us or of ours, in the Ground.

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The *Providence* of God is to be eyed, as in all the *Comforts* of a Family, so in all the *Troubles* of it. When *Sickness* does *Happen* in a Family, it comes not merely by *Hap*. It was said, Amos III. 6. *Shall there be Evil in a City, and the Lord hath not done it?* We may say, *Shall there be Sickness in a Family, and the Lord hath not sent it?* When *Health* is taken away from any of us, 'tis by the Hand of Him, who is, *The God of our Health*. It was the *Creation* of God, which put our Body's in their good Order at the first: If *Sickness* put our Body's out of Order, there is the *Providence* of God, ordering of it. Are we *Sick*? We must *Esteem* our selves to be *Stricken & Smitten of God and Afflicted*. Indeed, there are some *Diseases*, in which the more *Immediate Hand* of God, (and of His Angels,) may *Scourge* the Sinful Children of men. The *Leprosy*, as it often Arrested, first, the *Houses*, and then the *Garments*, and then (upon Impenitency) the *Bodies* of the *Israelites*, in the Holy Land, seems to have been one of those Diseases. And even the most Famous Pagan Physician, advises the Practitioners of Physick, to mind, whether there be no

extraordinary Stamp of a *Divine Hand* in those Diseases, which they undertake to meddle with. But *every Disease*, whatever be the *Next Cause* of it, must be look'd upon as proceeding from *God*, the *First Cause* of all. Is any one *Sick* in a *Family*? Let every one there say, *'Tis the Hand of God now upon the Family.* GOD is now fulfilling that word; Mic. VI. 13. *I will make thee Sick in smiting thee.*

But then, Secondly. Should not this *Acknowledgment* be accompanied with a suitable *Humiliation* of the *whole Family*, when *Sickness* is in a Family? 'Tis highly Reasonable that it should be so. Where *Sickness* comes, the Complaint is that, Psal. CXLII. 6. *I am brought very low.* Certainly, it becomes a Family to *be very Low* before God, when He shall send *Sickness* into it. *Sickness* in a Family, does cause no little *Sorrow* to the Family. 'Tis an unspeakable Encumbrance unto a Family, to have *Sickness* in it; it Encumbers a Family with a multitude of Inconveniences. The Pale, the Swollen, the Wasted, and perhaps the Spotted Faces of the *Sick* in the Family, are such as our Heavenly Father has been *Spitting* upon: Shall *He Spit in*

our

our Faces, and shall not we be Ashamed? A Family under the Rebuke of God by *Sickness*, is then to take that Advice, 1 Pet. V. 6. *Humble your selves under the Mighty Hand of God.* No *Weary Murmurings*, I beseech you, when weary Days, and weary Nights, thro' *sickness* are appointed for you! 'Tis GOD, that hath appointed 'em. Humbly own the *Sovereignty* of God; Say, *Lord, Thou might'st have made Us Sick as well as One!* Humbly own the *Righteousness* of God; Say, *Lord, We all deserve to be Sick, and are Punished less than our Iniquities deserve!* Humbly own the *Wisdom* of God, and Submit unto the *Sickness* in the Family, as a *Cross* of His laying upon us. The *Sickness* may be called a *Potion*, which our Lord Himself has mingled for us: It becomes us to say, *The Cup which my Heavenly Father orders for this Family, shall not I drink of it?* Imitating the words of the *Psalmist*, [Psal. XXXIX. 9, 10, 11.] Humbly say; *Lord, I will be Dumb, and not open my Mouth, because thou dost what is done in the Family; 'Tis the stroke of thy Hand, that is upon us in our Sickness; We are consumed by the blow of thy Hand:*

'Tis thy Rebuke that makes what is desirable here to Melt away!

Thirdly, *Sickness* bringing such an *Humiliation* upon a Family, methinks, it should also bring a *Reformation* into the Family. When a *Distemper* comes into a Family, 'tis very certain, it should *Cure* every *Disorder* in that Family. All the Griefs & Groans of a *Sick* Person in the Family, are so many pungent Sermons, for the *Reformation* of all that is amiss; Lively Sermons upon such a Text as that; Job XXII. 23. *Thou shalt put away iniquity far from thy Tabernacles.* When *Sickness* comes into a Family, it is a Day of *Adversity*, wherein every one in the Family should *Consider* how they have Miscarry'd, & Reform all their own Miscarriages. But especially, it now concerns the *Master* of the Family, so to take the Warning from the *Sickness* in his Family, as to Reform every thing that may be there Provoking to God. My Friend, Let the *Sickness* there put thee upon awful Tho'ts, what shall now be done that *Family Piety*, & *Family Instruction*, & *Family Government*, may more flourish in thy Family, than heretofore. Most of all, if any *Master* of a Family hath been so

very

very Criminal, as to neglect *Family Prayer*, let him hear the Cry of the *Sickness* in his Family unto him, thus Articulated, *Oh! neglect Family Prayer no longer!* Now call thy Folks together; tell them that thy *Family*, whereto the God of Heaven speaks by the *Sickness* now upon it, shall be no longer *Prayerless*; tell them thou art afraid lest God go on to *pour out His Fury* in something worse than *Sickness*, upon a Family *that calls not on his Name*: Fall down upon thy Knees in the midst of them, & spread the Sins, the Wants, the Fears, & the Desires of thy Family, as well as thou canst before the Lord. *Happy & Healthy, that Sickness, which thus Reforms the Family that it comes into!*

More than so; Fourthly, If it be a Time of *General Sickness*, we should all in General join in the Methods of Devotion, to obtain a stop to the Judgment, by the Efficacy of the *Great Sacrifice for the Congregation*. Sometimes a Sickness rages in a Place; and not one or two, but many Families are Visited. Now 'tis a Time for all the Families in a Neighbourhood, Unanimously, to Concur in more than ordinary Supplications. The Cry of a raging

and

and spreading *sickness* to a whole Neighbourhood, is that, Jonah III. 8. *Fast and Cry mightily unto God, and turn every one from his evil way.* But that the Supplications may become Effectual, there is one Signal and Glorious point of Christianity to be observ'd. There are *Destroying Angels*, as with *Drawn Swords*, by a Commission from God, inflicting of such a Sickness for the *Destruction*, or at least the *Vexation* of the Inhabitants. The way to prevail with God, for the preventing of such a dreadful Commission, is to bring & plead a *Sacrifice*. It was of old said, Numb. XIV. 46. *Bring Incense, go quickly, & make Atonement; for there is wrath gone out from the Lord; the Plague is begun.* But what *Sacrifice* have we to Plead in this Case? None truly but the Alsufficient *Sacrifice* of our Lord Jesus Christ. We are to plead this with God; *O Most Glorious God; Our Lord Jesus Christ hath suffered that just Wrath of thine, which is due to us for our sins: Let the sufferings of our Lord Jesus Christ save us from thy Wrath: Oh, Pity us & Pardon us. & let us be saved from horrible Sicknesses, for the sake of those Expiatory Sufferings wherein our Lord Jesus*

Christ

Christ hath born our Sicknesses. Christians, be assured; The Believers who so Present before God the *Sacrifice* of the Lord Jesus Christ, on the behalf of the *Towns* where they Live, are the very *Gapmen* of the Towns. And by this *Faith* in that *Great Sacrifice*, we may particularly procure our own *Houses* to be *sprinkled* with that *Blood*, by which our *Families* may be preserved in Jesus Christ. Oh! Nothing so Grateful to the Blessed God; no Plea so Powerful, as to mention the *Blood* of His *Beloved* Son before Him.

II. There is a *Duty* incumbent on such in the Family, as are not lying under *Sickness*, when *Sickness* lies upon others in the Family. A *sickness* of any one in a Family, gives many *Healthful Counsils*, to those that are yet in *Health*. For,

First, The *Sickness* of any One in a Family, should engage the rest that are in Health to be very *Thankful* for their Health. It would indeed be worthy of a, *Lord, have Mercy upon us* on the Door, if all in a Family should be *sick*. An *Healthful* Person, has always very great cause to be a *Thankful* Person. What says the *Psalmist*? Psal. XLII. 11. *I will praise*

him

him who is the Health of my Countenance. But the *sickness* of any near unto us, aggravates the Cause, and calls for *Thankfulness!* Our *Health*, when others are *Sick*, as 'tis a *Distinguishing* Favour, so 'tis an *Unmerited* Favour. *Why me, Lord!* When others are Pining in Sickness, there can be no Reason assign'd for the Mercy of God, in sparing our Health, but only the *meer Mercy* of God. This affords a very cogent Reason, why we should be very Thankful for the Mercy! Well then, See thy *Sick* Friend Sweating, Hear thy *Sick* Friend Sighing, under *Sickness*, when *Chastened on their Bed*: Their *Soul abhors all manner of Meat*, they *Draw near unto the Gates of Death*, they Pant, they Faint, they can hardly speak; but all this while they *Cry aloud* unto thee; *Oh! I prize thy precious Health, & Praise the Merciful God for a Mercy that never can be prized enough!*

Secondly, And yet, *Prepare for sickness!* The *Sickness* of One in a Family, bids all the rest, *Prepare to be Sick.* The *Feeble Voice* of the *Sick*, it as notably, as if they should *Lift up their voice like a Trumpet*, Speaks unto us, that Isa. XL. 6. *All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness*

thereof

thereof, it as the flower of the field. Sickneſs in a Family, is a Lecture upon *Humane frailty*: And the Language of it, is, *Oh! Do with thy Might what thy Hand finds to do, while thou art in thy Health; and leave not unto a Time of ſickneſs, the doing of thoſe things, for which there is no Time in ſickneſs!* If it be Neceſſary for us, to make, A WILL, that Right and Peace may not be injured when we are Dead, a *ſick* Perſon in a Family will ſhow us, that we ſhould not have this to do, when we come to be *Sick*. But above all, 'Tis neceſſary for us, to make a *Timely Proviſion for Eternity*. This PROVISION is made, How? By Conſenting to every Article, in the *Covenant of Grace*; *By* Submiting to the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, as our *Prieſt*, our *Prophet* and our *King*; *By* Accepting of the *Righteouſneſs*, which our *Surety* has wrought out for us, that we may therein ſtand Righteous before the *Judge of All*; And *By* Complying with the *Holy Spirit*, who offers to *Renew* us, and *Poſſeſs* us, and *Convert* us to God, and *Unite* us to Chriſt, & *Reſcue* us from Sin, and *Prepare* us for Heaven. Immortal Soul; *Neceſſity is laid upon thee to do theſe things*,

things, and wo unto thee, if thou do them not. But will a *sick Bed* afford a *proper Season* for the doing of such things? It may be, you have not heard, (as We have) the Miserables upon a *sick Bed*, Crying out with inexpressible Anguish; *In my Health I made no Preparation for Death! And, O Sir, Is it not now too late? Is it not now too late?* But the Sickness in your Family, may terribly inculcate this Caution upon you; *Don't, Oh! Don't put off your Turning to God, until you come to be Sick: you'l make poor mean, sickly, and most uncertain Work of it, if you do.*

And Thirdly, Have they that are in *Health*, nothing to do for the *sick* in the Family? Yes, We should *Exhort one another*, whom we see under *Sickness*; *and so much the more as ye see the Day approaching*, wherein they are to take that Important Step, which their Everlasting Weal or Wo turns upon. Oh! Drop as many *sound Words* as we can, upon our *sick Friends*. And Speak *For* them as well as *To* them: Carry them to our Lord Jesus Christ, by our *Prayers* for His Help, as they did of old, and found it not in vain to do so. Yea, Pray *With* them too, as well

well as *For* them, if it may be done with Decency. *Husbands*, and *Parents*, and *Masters* in the Family, can do no less. It is said, Jam. V. 16. *The Prayer of Faith, shall save the Sick.* Nor should we withhold any Charitable Assistences, that we can give towards the Relief of the *Sick*. To Relieve the *Sick*, is an *Angelical* Office and Service! When the Pestilence made horrid havock in *Alexandria*, 'twas noted, That the *Heathens* ran away from their deareſt Relations, under the dread of the Infection; when the *Christians* bravely expoſed their Lives in looking after the *Sick*, and with a sort of *Martyrdom*, even *Dy'd* themselves to save others from *Death*. Yea, our Charity should look *Abroad*, as well as *at Home*; and be able to say, *My Soul is grieved for the Poor*. The *Sickness* in thy own Family, O Good Man, should awaken thy *Consideration* of the *Sick* Elsewhere, whose *Poverty* & *Penury* is greater than thine, and who are destitute of such Comfortable Supports as thy *Sick* ones are surrounded withal. There is a Wonderful Encouragement; Psal. XLI. 1, 2, 3. *Blessed is he that Considers the Poor, the Lord will Deliver him in time of Trou-*

ple: *the Lord will Preſere him, and Keep him Alive, and he ſhall be Bleſſed upon the Earth; The Lord will ſtrengthen him upon the bed of Languiſhing; Thou wilt make all his Bed in his Sickneſs.* Every Syllable is a Cordial, beyond the Richeſt *Elixir* in the World! Will you take Notice of it, O ye who *Deviſe Liberal Things*!

And, Fourthly. With their *Alms*, there ſhould go up the *Prayers* of them that are in *Health*, as a *Memorial before God*, that He may keep them in *Health*. It is a due Courſe, Pſal. XLII. 8. *My Prayer is unto the God of my Life.* Let the *Sickneſs* of any one in a Family, ſet all the reſt a Praying, that they may be Preſerved from *Sickneſs*: A Praying, *Preſerve me, O God, for in thee do I put my Truſt*: A Praying, *Lord, Deal bountifully with thy Servant, that I may Live & Keep thy Word.* In thus Praying, we ſhould urge the agreeable *Promiſes* of our God; ſuch Promiſes as we find in the NINETY FIRST PSALM; A Pſalm, which may be of Singular Uſe to us, eſpecially when Epidemical and Peſtilential *Sicknеſſes*, are formidable among us.

III. When *Sickneſs* is in a Family, there

there is a *Duty* incumbent upon the *Sick* themselves, as well as upon the rest in the Family. Perhaps, *O Languishing Persons*, you may hear these Lessons Read unto you, if you are thro' *Sickness* not able your selves to Read them.

First; *Repentance! Repentance!* That is the *Sick* Mans main Duty & Interest; tho' 'tis well if *Repentance* then come Soon Enough, to Be Good, or to Do any Good. Now to carry on this *Repentance*, there must be several Actions. If *Sickness* be come upon you, Examine the *Cause* of the *Sickness*, I mean the *Sin* that is the *Moral Cause* of it. When *Sickness* overtakes us, there is usually some *Cause* to be enquired after. God will have us to know, *That He hath not without a Cause done all that He hath done unto us.* [See 1 Cor. XI. 30.] Upon the Arrest of any *Sickness* then Conclude, *Here is a Sickness come for something!* And immediately fall to enquiring what *Controversy* of God with us may be the most probable Cause of our *Sickness*. Make that Petition, Job X. 2. *Shew me wherefore thou Contendest with me.* And then, Let both *Scripture* and *Conscience* have a fair Hearing upon it.

It is said, *Fools because of their Transgression, and because of their Iniquities are Afflicted* with *Sickness*. When we have Discovered the *Folly* that has bro't our *Sickness* upon us, Oh! Confess it and Bewail it before the Lord, and Ask the *Pardon* of it, thro' the *Blood* of *Jesus Christ the Son of God, which Cleanseth from all Sin.* Yea, but the *Sick* Man must express this *Repentance* of *Every Sin. Sickness* causes *Loathing.* O *Sick* Man, Let all *Sin* become of all things the most *Loathsome* unto thee. If thou hast any measure of Strength for it, Let the EXPOSITION of the TEN COMMANDMENTS in the *Catechisms* be distinctly Read over unto thee; Make a pause upon every Clause, and ponder, *Have not I Omitted what is thus Required by God?* And, *Have not I Committed what is thus Forbidden by God? Judge* thy self before God, as worthy to be *Judg'd* unto Eternal Misery's, for these thy Sins. But be sure to Reflect upon that Fountain & Bundle of all Sins, thy *Original Sin*, and *Know the Plague of thy own Heart.* Thus Mourn for all thy Sins, even till thou dost *Water thy Couch with thy Tears.* And especially Mourn for thy

Loss

Loss of Time: A Sin big with bitter Lamentations. In *Sickness* we lose much *Time*, & are threatned that we shall have but little more *Time*. Now is a *Time* for us to Mourn, *Lord, I Mourn that I have so Sinfully Misspent my Time.* When the *Ax is laid unto the Root of our Tree*, in *Sickness*, what can we do, but Mourn for our *Unfruitfulness*? Behold now the Lord JESUS CHRIST, that *Saviour and Great One*, making a Tender of Himself and of His *Great Salvation*, even unto the *Chief of Sinners*. Oh! Hearken to Him; for now He says to thee, Distressed Sinner, *Look unto Me, and be Saved!* Let so Gracious a Tender, Melt thy very Heart within thee; with a Distressed, an Agonizing, an Astonished Soul, declare unto the Lord Jesus Christ, *Lord, I fly to thee as my Refuge, my Helper, and my Portion, and by thy Help, I give my self back unto thee!* Do this once, Do it again, Do it a thousand times over, Do it as long as thou hast a Breath to draw in the World. Thy *Life*, the Life of a Never-dying *Soul* depends upon it.

But is it not now altogether *Too Late*? It is true, A *Death-bed Repentance* is very

ſeldom True! Oh! Mourn, That thou haſt made it *ſo late*. Let the *Lateneſs* of thy *Repentance*, be not the leaſt *Matter* of thy *Repentance*. And yet *ſtrive to enter into the ſtrait Gate*. It may be 'tis not altogether *Too late*; The *Door* is not yet ſhut: And *Better late than never*!

Secondly; It becomes a *Sick* Perſon, Sincerely, Entirely, Chearfully, to Leave unto the Great God, the *Iſſue* of the *ſickneſs*. Adore the Great God, O *Sick* Man, as the Abſolute *Lord of thy Life*. Be willing to *Dye* or to *Live*, juſt as the Great GOD ſhall pleaſe to Appoint. Stand like a *Centinel*, in thy Station, ready to Move juſt as thy Great Commander ſhall give His Orders concerning thee. Suppoſe God ſhould even *Refer* it unto thee, whether to *Dye* or to *Live*, be ready to Reply, *I would Refer it to him again*! Say, Pſal. XXXI. 15. *Lord, My Times are in thy Hand*; And add, *Lord, It is fit, that thou alone ſhouldeſt have the Diſpoſal of all my Times*.

Thirdly; A *Sick* Perſon ſhould be more Deſirous to be Delivered from *Sin*, than from *Sickneſs*. Be more Sick of *Sin*, O Sick Man, than of any *Sickneſs*. About

the

the Rage of thy Sinful Passions, Let this be thy Sense, *This is worse than any Fever.* Let no *Pain* in thy *Flesh* be so painful as This; *There dwells no good Thing in my Flesh. Sickness* makes thee *Listless* and *Feeble*; Oh, Let thy *Listlessness* to, and *Feebleness* in the Work of God, be more Uneasy to thee. It was said, Isa. XXXIII. 24. *The Inhabitant shall not say, I am Sick; the People shall be forgiven their Iniquity.* Count it better to have *Iniquity* taken away, than to say, *I am not Sick.*

Fourthly; If God will have the *Sickness to be unto Death*, yet let it be *unto the Glory of God*, by your *Dying in Faith*: A *Faith* whereof the *End* will be *the salvation of the Soul.* It is an excellent *Epitaph* upon some; Heb. XI. 13. *They Dy'd in Faith.* You *Live* by it: Oh! *Dy* in it.

The *sick* bro't thus *Low*, are doubtless now, no longer Able to Read; but let some Faithful Attendant, watch an Opportunity now to Read these Lines unto them.

'Distressed Sinner, Behold the Lovely 'JESUS, the Man on the *Throne* of 'God, in whom the Eternal Word and 'Son of God has Chosen His Everlasting

'Habi-

'Habitation, that *Saviour and Great One*, 'making a Tender of Himself, and of 'His *Great salvation*, even unto the *Chief 'of Sinners*. Be Amazed at this Grace! 'Lift up thy Cry to Sovereign *Grace*, 'for Help to Believe and Embrace this 'most Gracious Tender, which of thy 'self thou are not Able to do. Then 'with an Agonizing and an Astonished 'Soul, Declare unto the Glorious JESUS, '*Lord, I fly to thee, as my Refuge and my 'Saviour. Oh! Do thou now apply to my Repenting, Humble and Contrite Soul, the Pardon, which thou didst by thy precious 'Blood purchase for me, while I was yet an 'Enemy of God. But with a Pardon, Oh! Bestow upon me that Blessing, which my 'Soul would value as much as any Pardon; 'The Blessing of a New Heart: The Blessing of an Heart filled with the Love of 'God: The Blessing of an Heart always to 'chuse the Things that Please the Lord.*

Having thus led them into the Path of Life; Let this one more Paragraph be Read unto them.

'O Man; Apprehensive of *thy Soul 'drawing near unto the Grave, and thy 'Life unto the Destroyers*; If God will 'have

'have thy present *Sickness* to be *unto*
'*Death*; yet let it be *unto the Glory of God*,
'by thy *Dying in Faith*, even a *strong*
'*Faith*, *which will give Glory to God*.
'Thy *Faith* must be thy *Life*; and thy
'Victory over *Death*. *Dye* like *Stephen*,
'by *Faith*, Committing a Soul into
'the Hands of the Faithful JESUS.
'Let thy *Dying* Ejaculations, be with all
'possible Frequency and Fervency in
'those Terms; Psal. XXXI. 5. *Lord, Into*
'*thy Hands I Commit my Spirit*. *Dye*,
'Perswaded, that thy *Soul* shall never
'*Dye*. Fully Believe the *Immortality of*
'*the Soul*; Departing hence, think, *I am*
'*going to the Immortals*. *Dye*, Perswa-
'ded that thy *Body* shall after *Death* re-
'turn to *Life*. Strongly Believe, *The*
'*Resurrection of the Body*, when thy *Mind*
'is taking a Farewel of thy Weakned *Body*.
'*Dye*, Perswaded of the Heavenly Bles-
'sedness, which is *Reserved in the Hea-*
'*vens* for the Righteous. If thou canst
'attain to it, Come to that, *I desire to be*
'*Dissolved, and to be with Christ, which*
'*is by far the Best of all!* Reckon *Death*
'which is the *Last Enemy*, to be turned
'into a *Good Friend*, by the Influences of

'the

'the Dear JESUS, who *was Dead and is Alive, and behold He Lives for evermore.* 'The Sting of *Death* having been once 'fastned on our Surety JESUS, now, even 'Triumph over it, and say, *O Death, Where is thy sting? Thou wilt only strip me of my Sin, which is my worst Enemy; and fit me for my Everlasting Rest.* Finally, *Dye*, Perswaded, That the God 'with whom *the Fatherless find Mercy*, 'will take a *Fatherly Care* of *thine*, after 'thou shalt be Dead and Gone; Perswaded, for thy *Orphans*, that when *their Father and their Mother forsakes them, the Lord will take them up.* Oh! By *Faith* leave them in the Hands of thy 'Saviour, and then say with the Martyr; *I have left them with an Able and a Faithful Guardian.* My Friend, May thy *End* be in this *Peace of God!*

And now, Suppose a *Sickness* prove Mortal to any in the *Family*, is there no Duty now incumbent on the Family? Yes; The Duty of the *Profoundest Resignation!* Whatever Flower in our Garden be Cropt, tho' it be our *Isaac*, yet Resign it, and let it be said of us, Gen. XXII. 12.

Now

Now I know that thou Fearest God, because thou hast not withheld any thing from Him! A Bereavement bro't by *Sickness* upon a Family, must be undergone with *Patience*; For, *If thou Faint in the day of this Adversity thy strength is but small.* Too *small* is the *trength* of a *Rachel*, when, for the Death of her Children, she *Refuses to be Comforted*; Yea, Too *small* is the *Strength* of a *David*, when he Cries, *My Son, O my Son, I wish I had died for thee!* *Lamentations* are not *Amiss*; We must not be Stocks and Stones: But yet, we may *do much Amiss* in our *Lamentations.* It is Enjoyned upon Christians, 1 Thes. IV. 13. *Do not Sorrow as others, that have no Hope.* Our Lord came upon some Immoderate Mourners, with such a Reprehension; Mark V. 39, *Why make ye this Ado?* He speaks it unto our Mourners; *Why make ye this Ado?* May not the God of Heaven Dispose of the Potsherds of the Earth, as Pleases Him? *Why make ye this Ado?* Have you Lost All, and is not GOD and CHRIST Living still? *Why make ye this Ado?* Are not the Dead gone only a Little before, and shall not you

you Quickly follow them? *Be still* then, O ye Storms of Grief in the Bereaved. Let us now hear nothing but This; *The Lord has Given, and the Lord has Taken away; and Blessed be the Name of the Lord.*

FINIS.

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